United Nations A/C.2/61/SR.4

General Assembly
Sixty-first session

Official Records

Distr.: General
24 October 2006

Original: English

Second Committee

Summary record of the 4th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 3 October 2006, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Intelmann ..... (Estonia)
later: Mr. Barry (Vice-Chairperson) ..... (Senegal)

Contents

General debate (*continued*)

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

06-55170 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

General debate (*continued*)

1. **Mr. Liu** Zhenmin (China) said that development called for global stability, which could only be achieved through mutually beneficial partnership, and should be pursued through strategies linked to the Millennium Development Goals. The international community, and especially the developed countries, should help the developing countries to make full use of the opportunities offered by globalization by providing practical support in priority areas, increasing development aid, extending debt relief, promoting international trade, technology transfer and investment, and assisting them to build capacity for development and to participate in world trade.

2. For globalization to succeed, the multilateral trading system must be fair, open and non-discriminatory. The suspension of the Doha Round was not in anyone's interest. The major developed countries should take the lead in restarting them. To enable the developing countries to reap the benefit of their comparative advantages, World Trade Organization members should strive to remove trade barriers, establish a fair and competitive trading system, handle trade disputes appropriately and avoid politicizing trade issues. The least developed countries should be given preferential treatment for their exports.

3. Financial security was the bedrock of stable development. Full use should be made of steady economic growth in the world to reform and improve the world financial system. His delegation welcomed the Resolution on Quota and Voice Reform recently adopted by the International Monetary Fund. It hoped the second-stage reform would be implemented soon, and would focus on increasing the basic votes significantly and increasing the representation of the developing and low-income countries.

4. Energy security had become a hidden threat for world economic development. International cooperation was needed to expand sources of energy, maintain energy market stability, increase the efficiency of energy use through advanced technology, and reduce negative impacts on the environment. Funds and technologies should be transferred to the developing countries to boost their efforts to protect the environment while achieving sustainable development.

5. The United Nations should play a leading role in development by building an effective framework for evaluating progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, improving the coordination of world development policies and of monetary, financial and trade mechanisms, and creating an enabling international environment for developing countries. His country supported efforts to increase investment and secure resources for development, and to reform the United Nations development agencies.

6. China's economic development had been rapid, and it had been able to increase its support to the developing countries. Following the establishment of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, a summit and ministerial conference would be held in Beijing in November 2006, and was expected to launch new debt relief and tariff exemptions for African countries, together with increased bilateral aid and additional medical and human resources. China would continue to play a strong role, within the framework of South-South cooperation, in promoting the common development of the developing countries.

7. As the largest developing country in the world, China still faced many difficulties, such as widespread poverty, unbalanced development and huge environmental pressures. It was now implementing its eleventh five-year plan, which stressed economic and social development and the steady improvement of living standards. It would continue to increase the efficiency of energy use and of resources in general, while protecting the environment and coordinating economic development with population, resource and environmental considerations.

8. **Mr. Asare** (Ghana), noting that ODA still fell far short of the $150 billion thought necessary for developing countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, pointed out that it was trade, not debt relief, that spurred development. That made it the more regrettable that the negotiations on the Doha Development Round of the World Trade Organization had suddenly been suspended in July 2006. Without a timely and satisfactory outcome to the Doha Development Agenda, developing countries, especially in Africa, would be unable to achieve the economic growth necessary to meet the Millennium Development Goals. His delegation called for the immediate resumption of the negotiations. To benefit fully from a development-oriented global trading system, developing countries needed greater access to the

markets of developed countries, together with financial assistance to remove supply-side constraints.

9. Migration was an aspect of underdevelopment. People would continue to search for better opportunities outside their own countries as long as social and economic disparities, rising unemployment and armed conflict persisted at home. Following the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, Ghana strongly endorsed the call for further international dialogue to maximize the gains from migration and reduce its negative effects through policy coherence and harmonization.

10. In conclusion, his country believed in good governance as a crucial factor in sustainable development and had been working tirelessly to achieve it.

11. **Mr. Amin-Mansour** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that global economic imbalances continued to pose risks to the world economic outlook. Poorer countries had less diversified economies and export structures, and were therefore more vulnerable to shocks in international financial markets. In most parts of the world, trade liberalization had brought an expansion of export volumes, but not higher economic growth. Encouraging greater economic and export diversification required appropriate domestic policies and a favourable trading environment for developing countries. Improved trading opportunities for developing countries should involve improved market access for their agricultural and manufacturing exports. Developing countries also required more space to adopt policies to build their supply capacity and large-scale investments in the development of infrastructure. Lastly, human development and a better educated population were prerequisites for sustained economic growth.

12. The recent Summit of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Havana, had condemned unilateral coercive economic measures, which continued to pose clear threats to international trade and to hinder the development process at the national, regional and international levels. The suspension of the Doha Development Round negotiations continued to depress agricultural production, and thus the income of many people, particularly farmers in developing countries.

13. According to recent estimates, the number of people in the world without enough food to meet their basic needs was increasing. Although the hardest hit regions — sub-Saharan Africa and southern Asia — had made progress in recent years, those advances had not kept pace with those of the early 1990s. Although universal primary education was reported to be closer to reality, sub-Saharan Africa lagged behind. There continued to be an educational gender gap, and rural children were less likely than urban children to attend school. Although more children were surviving their first year of life, maternal mortality remained high where most deaths occurred. Although more people were receiving treatment for HIV/AIDS, and prevention efforts were proving successful in some places, deaths and new infections continued to increase. Rapid deforestation continued, although the net loss of forest area was slowing. Energy use had become more efficient in most regions, but two and a half years after the adoption of policies and possible actions in the Commission on Sustainable Development, half the developing country populations lacked basic sanitation. Under such circumstances, the world was unlikely to reach its sanitation-related targets by 2015.

14. In order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and reduce the significant gap in living standards between the developing and developed countries, the global partnership for development must be strengthened. The successful conclusion of the GEF-4 replenishment during the recent Third Assembly of the Global Environment Facility had been another turning point in GEF activities. However, the financial resources committed were far from sufficient. Member States must accelerate their follow-up to negotiations on United Nations reform, system-wide coherence, mandate review and environmental activities in order to ensure that all United Nations entities worked in a more coherent and effective manner.

15. Natural disasters were increasing in frequency and severity, and collective measures to mitigate their impact required the further attention of the international community. The recently held High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development could be regarded as another positive step for United Nations efforts to address the developmental aspects of international migration. His delegation hoped that by following up on the issue, all countries involved would be able to maximize the benefits and minimize the negative consequences of migration.

16. Lastly, the recently held High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Midterm Comprehensive Global Review of the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 had provided another opportunity for the international community to review its successes and failures of the past five years and accelerate its efforts to fully implement the Programme of Action before 2010. Given the vulnerabilities of the least developed countries, greater international action was required to support their efforts to achieve sustained economic growth.

17. **Mr. Kittikhoun** (Lao People's Democratic Republic), speaking on behalf of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, said that according to the *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2006*, the world economy had been strong at the beginning of 2006 and a large number of developing countries had regained the momentum of broad and solid growth. However, despite sustained growth, economic performance varied widely among the least developed countries. The most vulnerable least developed countries and landlocked developing countries had suffered from the hike in oil prices and had limited access to external funding, further contributing to their vulnerability.

18. Lack of territorial access to the sea, remoteness and isolation from major world markets, and high transit costs hampered the ability of landlocked developing countries to compete in the world trading system and presented major obstacles to their overall economic development. Their geographical situations also made landlocked developing countries unattractive to foreign investment and other financial flows. The landlocked developing countries were among the poorest developing countries, with the lowest growth rates and heavy debt burdens.

19. The Group of Landlocked Developing Countries therefore renewed its call for an enabling global environment that was conducive to development, as well as effective measures to stimulate growth and ensure the stability of the world economy, giving special attention to the unique and very difficult problems faced by landlocked developing countries in the World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations, with particular regard to trade facilitation and market access for agricultural and non-agricultural goods. Particular attention should be given to products of special interest to the landlocked developing countries, as called for in the Almaty Programme of Action, the São Paolo Consensus and various General Assembly resolutions.

20. The landlocked developing countries should also be given sufficient financial and technical support by the donor community, without the imposition of harsh conditions and complex procedures. Priority should be given to the landlocked developing countries in the implementation of aid-for-trade initiatives by development partners, so that they could effectively participate in WTO negotiations on the Asunción Platform for the Doha Development Round. The Group called for an early resumption of the Doha negotiations, as well as increased assistance from the international community.

21. It was crucial for the landlocked developing countries to mainstream the Almaty Programme of Action agenda into national development strategies and programmes, improve or put in place the necessary implementation mechanisms, update domestic legal frameworks where necessary, and accede to the relevant international conventions on transit transport. They should also intensify mutual cooperation with their transit neighbours.

22. At their recent landmark summit in Havana, Cuba, the Heads of State or Government of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries had reaffirmed their commitment to the full and effective implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action. The Declaration adopted at the meeting had reaffirmed the right of landlocked developing countries to have access to and from the sea, reiterated their commitment to establishing genuine partnerships with their transit developing countries and development partners, and stressed the need to establish dialogue between Governments of landlocked developing countries and business communities. Most importantly, the participants had proposed that a midterm review should be conducted in 2008 to assess the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action. The Group appealed to the international community to lend the necessary support and assistance for the review.

23. Lastly, the Group wished to reiterate its request to the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States to enhance its coordination and cooperation with United Nations agencies and other relevant international

organizations with a view to ensuring the full and effective implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, in line with the relevant General Assembly resolutions.

24. *Mr. Barry (Senegal), Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.*

25. **Mr. Lim** (Singapore) said that in her opening remarks, the Chairman had rightly identified globalization and interdependence as the overarching themes for the Committee's work. Globalization had provided opportunities for economic growth and efficiency and helped many countries enjoy higher standards of living. Many developing countries had doubled their ratio of trade to income, and many were now exporters of industrial products and services, as well as commodities and primary products.

26. However, not all had benefited equally from opportunities from globalization. Technology had brought the world closer but had also created a divide between those who could harness its benefits and those who could not easily do so. Although communications technology opened windows into other lands and cultures, it also accentuated perceptions of marginalization. Risk factors such as rising oil prices and the suspension of the Doha negotiations also threatened economic growth and overall development.

27. Clearly, the development agenda should remain a priority for the United Nations. The President of the General Assembly had rightly identified "Strengthening global partnership for development" as the key theme for the Assembly's sixty-first session, and it was important that developed countries should fulfil their commitments to implement the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits, as well as other internationally agreed goals.

28. Expanding international commerce and negotiating reductions of trade barriers was one way to combat poverty. Although it might not be possible to achieve all the international community's goals under the Doha Development Round, it would be grossly irresponsible to allow the negotiations to collapse. It was essential to negotiate a broad-based and balanced package with clear benefits for developing and least developed countries. Open markets and liberalization based on a transparent, fair and inclusive multilateral trading system could give millions of people in least developed countries a better life, and agricultural reform was the critical factor.

29. Fostering greater intra and cross-regional cooperation could also support development. Noting that South-South trade accounted for over 40 per cent of global commerce, he encouraged developing countries to work together more closely to stimulate mutual trade. Singapore strongly supported increased South-South cooperation, and was strongly committed to sharing its own experiences and helping developing countries upgrade their national capacities and human resources.

30. The fight against poverty would not be won simply by adopting a series of resolutions. National policies must complement and support international efforts to meet development challenges against the backdrop of a fast-changing and complex globalized international environment. Strategies should be approached on the basis of pragmatism. There was no such thing as a "one-size-fits-all" model, because sustainable growth and development were often influenced by many different factors. Finding the right balance between rules and regulations in order to ensure economic stability and legal certainty, on the one hand, and the economic freedom necessary for innovation and growth, on the other, was key to the formulation of any development strategy. Good governance, the rule of law and a sound macroeconomic framework were essential components of any strategy to build resilient and competitive economies, while investment in training and education, protection of property rights and the creation of a level playing field would also help attract investment, create employment, stimulate innovation and generate growth. Such measures always involved taking very difficult decisions and managing vested interests, but they must be taken, for the sake of the millions of people who would be lifted out of poverty as a result.

31. **Mr. Manis** (Sudan) said that his delegation supported the statement made by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. As a developing country neighbouring on four landlocked least developed countries, the Sudan also understood the concerns expressed by the representative of the Lao People's Democratic Republic on behalf of landlocked least developed countries and expressed its solidarity with them.

32. The significance of the current general debate in the Second Committee lay in the fact that it came directly in the wake of several important developments. The suspension of the Doha Round

negotiations, first of all, emphasized anew the pressing need to re-examine the foundations of international economic cooperation in a way that safeguarded the rights of developing countries, for otherwise international trade could not play its desired development role.

33. Secondly, the High-level Meeting on the Least Developed Countries, held in September 2006 had concluded that, five years after the adoption of the Programme, the majority of least developed countries still suffered from poverty, hunger and disease. That called for a stronger commitment by those countries and their development partners to implementing the Programme of Action and required fulfilment of development partners' promises to provide the necessary funds through increased ODA and debt cancellation. The Cotonou Strategy was a useful way for the two sides to assess the progress made and identify and correct the weak points.

34. Thirdly, the long-awaited first High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development signified global recognition of the development effects of migration. There was a need for a comprehensive treatment of those effects, transcending mere economic indicators to include cultural dimensions. His delegation looked forward to a constructive discussion of the agenda item, especially the aspects pertaining to follow-up of the outcomes of the High-level Dialogue.

35. Fourthly, his delegation hoped that current efforts towards the adoption of a resolution on the reform of the Economic and Social Council would meet with success, for that would enable the Council to carry out its assigned tasks efficiently and in line with efforts to reform the United Nations as a whole and with changes taking place internationally.

36. The major obstacle to the achievement of the goals agreed on at the conferences on sustainable development remained the mobilization of sources of financing. The widening gap between rich and poor could be narrowed only through a package of measures for increased flow of official assistance and foreign investment, comprehensive treatment of the debt problem, the opening of markets and productive capacity-building. Without foreign support, all the reform and other efforts of the developing countries would be for nought.

37. His delegation agreed with the Pakistani delegation's proposal that a matrix should be prepared to show the implementation of international development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. It should not be limited to implementation status, but focus also on obstacles to implementation.

38. The Sudan believed in the importance of strengthening South-South cooperation and regional economic integration, which had proven their effectiveness. Within the framework of regional organizations, joint projects were being planned with neighbouring States, relating to electrical grid interconnections, roads, facilitation of travel and freedom of movement and work. Such important cooperation, and especially the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), deserved encouragement and funding by the international community.

39. His country believed in the close connection between peace and development and had taken courageous steps to pave the way for sustainable development, including the signing of the comprehensive peace agreement in January 2005, which had brought an end to the longest war to occur on the African continent. A transition Constitution had been adopted that preserved the fundamental rights of citizens and laid solid foundations for equitable wealth distribution and power-sharing.

40. In May of the current year, the Sudan had signed the Darfur Peace Agreement and was assiduously seeking to bring the non-signatory parties into the Agreement. Despite the post-war challenges faced in the South, the Government had managed, through a series of economic reforms, to stabilize the economy, which had registered a rise of more than 8 per cent. It had also established a national anti-poverty plan with a focus on social security and women.

41. The principal obstacles the country faced in its efforts to rebuild, achieve development and meet its commitments under peace agreements while realizing the Millennium Development Goals stemmed from the unilateral economic sanctions imposed on the Sudan, the lack of external support and the debt burden. The elimination of debts would free up resources to ensure lasting peace. His country hoped the Second Committee would shed light on the concerns of countries emerging from conflicts, which faced unique challenges requiring special treatment on the part of the international community.

42. **Ms. Núñez Mordoche** (Cuba) said that the economic situation of the developing countries was deteriorating at an alarming rate and that the Millennium Development Goals had not been achieved, due to an unfavourable international economic environment and an unjust world order. The developing countries' external debt continued to grow and, in the case of the least developed countries, had reached unprecedented levels. The only solution was to cancel external debts unconditionally and develop mechanisms that guaranteed a sustained flow of financial resources under favourable conditions.

43. It was true that ODA had increased slightly but the increase was due largely to debt cancellation grants and emergency aid and the assistance was based on conditions. Another problem was that the developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, were excluded from international markets. Coercive economic measures, unilateral sanctions and extraterritorial regulations, all of which violated the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, continued to hinder freedom of trade and investment. Cuba itself had long been the subject of an embargo by the world's main Power, which had had serious economic and social consequences for the Cuban people. Finally, natural disasters threatened the very existence of many countries, particularly the small island developing States.

44. Much of the developed world seemed to be unaware of the critical situation and showed little inclination to correct the structural inequalities of a trade system designed to benefit the richest nations. The suspension of the Doha Round was yet another example of rich countries placing their own interests ahead of cooperation and mutual benefit.

45. In conclusion, the only way to guarantee a true and just global association for development was to radically change the current world economic order, democratize the international financing institutions and strengthen the political will of the rich countries to fulfil their development commitments.

46. **Mr. Mahiga** (United Republic of Tanzania) said that the items before the Committee were especially critical for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals. During the past decade, the United Nations had adopted outcomes and established frameworks for the successful implementation of those goals; however, concerted action had not been taken, owing to a lack of political will. Fortunately, the 2005 World Summit Outcome and General Assembly resolution 60/265 had injected new impetus into the implementation process and had strengthened development partnerships.

47. The African continent had special needs and thus required special attention from the international community. Although domestic resources mobilization, ODA, FDI flows and debt relief had improved, Africa still lacked the required resources to achieve the Goals within the agreed time frame. His delegation therefore welcomed initiatives taken by development partners such as the Group of Eight and the European Union in accordance with the 2005 World Summit Outcome.

48. During the last two decades, many African countries had successfully undertaken reforms such as privatization and trade liberalization to help them reap the benefits of the global economic systems. Again, the international community needed to support their efforts and help develop a fair and better framework for international trade and finance.

49. The outcome of the Sixth World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference, held in Hong Kong, had been disappointing and the Doha Round would not be concluded as scheduled. Clearly, WTO needed to be reformed so that poor and rich countries could participate equally in decision-making. Above all, the developed countries should realize that the current protectionist policies were counterproductive and that, in the long run, their prosperity depended on global prosperity.

50. His delegation regretted that negotiations on the resolution to strengthen the Council had not found support and called on all Committee members to exercise flexibility so that the resolution could be adopted. It was vital that the Economic and Social Council should be empowered to enforce the implementation of development issues and that it should enjoy the same power as other major United Nations bodies.

51. Finally, it was to be hoped that the newly appointed High-Level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment would discover practical ways for the United Nations to improve its synergies and performance. The Second Committee should be prepared to play its part in

bringing about the transformation needed to make the Organization more effective.

52. **Mr. Hamidon Ali** (Malaysia) said that, although the 2006 global economic situation had been positive thus far, the global economy continued to face challenges such as large global imbalances, the rapid cooling down of the housing market and resulting slowdown of the United States economy, high oil prices and high inflationary pressures leading to the tightening of monetary policies.

53. Malaysia was particularly concerned at increasing international inequality. Despite periods of improved economic performance, the incomes of the developing countries had fallen further behind those of the developed countries and since 1980, the world had witnessed a dual divergence process, in which an increasing income gap between the developed and developing world was paralleled by diverging growth among developing countries. The divergence was all the more worrisome because it was due mainly to growth failures in a large number of countries rather than a situation where global inequality was rising because some economies were growing faster than others.

54. Malaysia was deeply concerned at the impasse in the WTO negotiations and was of the opinion that, given the enormous disparities in income between the developed and developing world, developing countries could not possibly make concessions equal to or greater than those of the developed countries. For its part, Malaysia would continue to support multilateral trade negotiations and would maintain a pragmatic policy by combining liberalization with regulation, in accordance with the country's economic conditions and development needs.

55. Given the current global economic challenges, the role of the United Nations in economic and developmental issues should be strengthened. In that regard, Malaysia was fully supportive of the theme proposed by the President of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, namely "Implementing a global partnership for development". That partnership should be aimed at strengthening the role of the entire United Nations system in economic and developmental issues; ensuring the full implementation of the internationally agreed economic and development targets; and promoting greater cohesion among all actors, including the Bretton Woods institutions and WTO. The Economic and Social Council also needed to be empowered and strengthened in such a way so as to achieve those aims.

56. As for the Malaysian economy in particular, it was essential that the country should maintain a high volume of trade and that it should remain internationally competitive. The Government was striving to achieve developed country status by 2020 and had developed a national plan to that end. It was of utmost importance that the implementation of the plan should proceed as scheduled and that the country's implementation machinery should be responsive, effective and free of corruption. In that connection, the implementation of the National Integrity Plan and awareness-raising activities by the Malaysian Integrity Institute were aimed at increasing the accountability and trustworthiness of public officials.

57. **Mr. Hackett** (Barbados), speaking on behalf of the States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that progress on the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals must be made on a much broader front and faster pace than was presently the case. The Committee should focus on implementation and aim at bridging the gap between commitment and action.

58. Small States faced the challenges of economic and political uncertainty and lacked the financial dexterity and resilience to respond as swiftly and decisively as was often necessary. Mindful of the need to orient themselves towards integration into global economic systems, the members of CARICOM had embarked on the establishment of a CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME).

59. The single market had been inaugurated recently, and the single economy would become effective in 2008. In outlining the major priorities of the Caribbean Community, he expressed concern at the suspension of the Doha Round and called for the resumption of talks in order to ensure the full realization of the development dimension of the Doha Agenda Work Programme. The final outcome must include provisions that would assist developing countries in implementing policies aimed at transforming their economies. Small, vulnerable economies could receive special and differential treatment to facilitate their full integration into the multilateral trading system. Rather than being considered a concession or exception to trading rules, special and differential treatment should be construed

as a concept based on the development and policy needs of countries at differing levels of development, and should consist of a broad mix of provisions and programmes that recognized the characteristics of developing countries and the economic challenges posed by trade liberalization and globalization.

60. CARICOM fully supported "Aid for Trade", and was also of the view that the Committee should urge WTO member States to ensure that the Doha negotiations fulfilled its development promise and implemented the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

61. He stressed the need to focus on the debt burden of middle-income developing countries in a more comprehensive manner, since the high per capita income in those countries often masked the true impact of the debt burden on their populations. Enhancing the participation of developing countries in international dialogue and decision-making was a fundamental prerequisite to improving global economic governance. The debate on the reform of the international financial architecture should not be restricted to the Bretton Woods institutions, but should be placed prominently on the United Nations agenda. The complexities of a globalized world required radical reforms in global economic and financial governance to promote equitable development. CARICOM had noted the process on the reform of a quota formula and basic votes initiated by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank Group, and believed that such a process must be open and transparent, and should not have a negative impact on the voice and representation of small States in the Bretton Woods institutions.

62. In keeping with its commitment to the preservation of the environment and the promotion of sustainable development, CARICOM called for the full implementation of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. He drew attention to the proposed resolution on the Caribbean Sea and said that, in recognition of the marine environment as a key resource that was central to the social and economic development of the region, CARICOM and other States members of the Association of Caribbean States were committed to achieving international recognition of the Caribbean Sea as a "special area". He looked forward to the continued support of the international community in the implementation of that initiative.

63. With regard to climate change, he said that while small island developing States produced the least greenhouse gases and other ozone-depleting emissions, they were the countries hardest hit by the adverse effects of global climate change. Phenomena such as sea-level rise and fierce hurricanes threatened their economies and very existence. He urged United Nations Member States that had not yet ratified the Kyoto Protocol to do so without delay, and called on the entire international community to honour their commitments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCC), support the adaptation efforts of small island developing States, and to conclude negotiations on a post-Kyoto framework involving the parties to the Convention. In anticipation of future actions on climate change, he said thematic discussions should be balanced, comprehensive and held from the perspective of the three dimensions of sustainable development. Given their vulnerability to natural disasters, CARICOM member States supported the implementation of the Hyogo Declaration and Framework for Action. The special needs and unique circumstances of small island developing States must be taken into account in the formulation of disaster risk reduction measures, post-disaster recovery and rehabilitation processes.

64. **Mr. Al-Nasser** (Qatar) said that prevailing economic conditions posed a real threat to social and economic development, particularly among the least developed countries. He joined previous speakers in blaming the dire economic prospects of developing countries on meagre ODA flows, unjust terms of trade, market access restrictions and unfair pricing of commodity exports, and the debt burden.

65. The international community had made commitments in various forums to create a political, economic and social environment favourable to translating the right to development into reality, and to foster cohesion, social integration and opportunities for poverty eradication. Those commitments had been undertaken in a spirit of international cooperation, and with the firm resolve that globalization should be just and inclusive so that developing countries would not incur the risk of economic marginalization. Free trade, trade liberalization and interdependence had been acknowledged as the best means for securing equitable economic development. Against that backdrop, he

expressed concern at the critical state of negotiations on the Doha Development Agenda and the hope that all parties concerned would soon muster the political will and flexibility to resume negotiations.

66. World leaders had recognized that development, peace, security and human rights were all interdependent foundations of the United Nations system and that development was a central aim in itself. The 2005 World Summit Outcome addressed the need to promote feasibility and coherence in United Nations operational activities, and to strengthen links between normative actions and operational activities. That linkage called for greater authority and effectiveness within the Economic and Social Council in its endeavour to promote economic, social and environmental cooperation.

67. The credibility of United Nations development assistance lay in its universality, impartiality, multilateralism and responsiveness to the needs of developing countries. New funding mechanisms must be explored to ensure adequate and predictable funding for development.

68. The outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development represented the manifestation of the political will of the international community at the highest level. Qatar had sought to assert its position as a supportive partner of development efforts, especially in the fight against poverty and the equitable distribution of the benefits of growth. Apart from its commitment to the established development assistance target, 15 per cent of which was earmarked for assistance to the least developed countries. Qatar had launched an initiative to establish the South Fund for Development and Humanitarian Assistance, and had donated 10 million dollars to the United Nations Fund for Democracy. In November, the Sixth International Conference for New or Restored Democracies would be held in Doha. His country had also offered to host the follow-up international conference on financing for development to review the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus.

69. **Mr. Morant** (Observer for the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources) said that the issue of sustainable development represented both an opportunity and challenge to the collective goodwill of nations, civil society and NGOs, among others. The International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) was committed to the effective management of natural resources to address poverty and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. IUCN had submitted several recommendations, within the framework of United Nations consultations, for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of coherent environmental management under the follow-up to the 2005 World Summit.

70. IUCN had a number of ongoing projects, including recent initiatives on water and poverty reduction, forestry and fishing, and had actively participated in consultations on international environmental governance.

71. Extensive efforts had been made in improving fragile coastal ecosystems. In conjunction with the relevant United Nations bodies, IUCN had embarked on several initiatives to highlight the problems of current sustainable development processes and policies, and provided a platform of collaboration to support the restoration of tsunami-ravaged areas while promoting livelihoods. Furthermore, IUCN had lately provided leadership in biodiversity at the Biodiversity in European Development Cooperation Conference, which had issued a statement recognizing the importance of biodiversity in good stewardship of the planet. The organization wished to contribute to the consolidation of commitments made by world leaders, and to heightening recognition of the role of biodiversity in sustainable development and strengthening ties to civil society and the business community.

72. The United Nations must immediately rationalize its policies and processes for achieving environmental and conservation outcomes for the benefit of populations worldwide. Investments in environmental sustainability should be seen as an effective means for achieving development. The wealth of IUCN experience with ecosystems and poverty reduction strategies represented agents of change, and the organization was uniquely equipped to complement international efforts to secure a more sustainable future.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.